

# Marathon man to say thank you to hospital for saving his parents' lives

Thursday 6 April, 2017

A Bromley local is set to take on the biggest challenge of his life by tackling the London Marathon this April to say thank you for the life-saving care his in-laws received at Hammersmith Hospital.

Paul Coward will be running the iconic 26.2 mile race after both his in-laws were treated at the renal unit at Hammersmith Hospital in West London. He is running in aid of Imperial College Healthcare Charity, which supports the five London hospitals of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, including Hammersmith Hospital, with all funds raised going to the hospital's renal unit.

He says: "Six years ago my mother-in-law suffered from acute kidney failure after a series of health issues. It came as a real shock to the family and needed immediate action. Luckily my wife was able to donate her kidney and Hammersmith supported them throughout the entire process, providing continued assurance and quality of care.

"My mother-in-law is still receiving after care at Hammersmith Hospital, and we're really grateful that the renal unit are always at hand to answer any question, big or small."

The 38-year-old received a further shock when his father-in-law was taken to the hospital in April 2016 suffering from sepsis, a potentially life-threatening condition that arises when the body's response to an infection damages its own tissues and organs.

"There were several complications, including the fact he was allergic to the medication he was given, had a really bad fall and deteriorated further, and his liver showed dysfunction. In all, my father-in-law was in hospital for about five or six months and currently undergoes dialysis there three days a week.

"Without the care and support of the renal unit, who knows what the outcome of my father-in-law's deteriorating health would have been. Having his own carer during his toughest moments was invaluable. The team at the unit have been fundamental in aiding his road to recovery, helping us to overcome many hurdles along the way."

His experience inspired Paul to enter the ballot for this year's London Marathon, where he'll join 37,000 others through the streets of the capital. Paul says: "My father ran the marathon many times and his dedication inspired me over the years. It's something I have always wanted to achieve and this year I was lucky enough to get a ballot place.

"Every year I've watched people of all ages and backgrounds step out of their comfort zone and accomplish something amazing. This is my way of raising money and awareness for a hospital that has - done so much for my wife and my in-laws, and giving them a better quality of life, which makes it even more worthwhile."

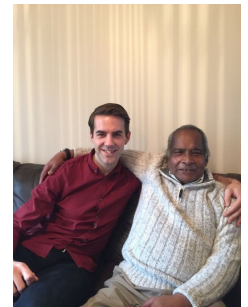
Paul is aiming to complete his first ever marathon in under four hours. "I have to admit, my regular football sessions haven't quite prepared me for this! For me, running the London Marathon is one of the biggest physical challenges you can set for yourself, so I have been training hard. It's been difficult at times, I've had a few problems along the way but I've not let that stop me," he says.

Paul has already raised more than £1450 of his £2000 target for Imperial College Healthcare Charity's renal fund, which supports the renal unit at the West London hospital.

"We're not stopping there," says Paul. "We're aiming to raise much more. Family and friends have been great, they are fully aware of how Hammersmith Hospital has supported us, so we really believe it's such a great cause."

To sponsor Paul, visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/paul-coward1979>

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